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COSTA MESA, CALIFORNIA

GENERAL PLAN 1990

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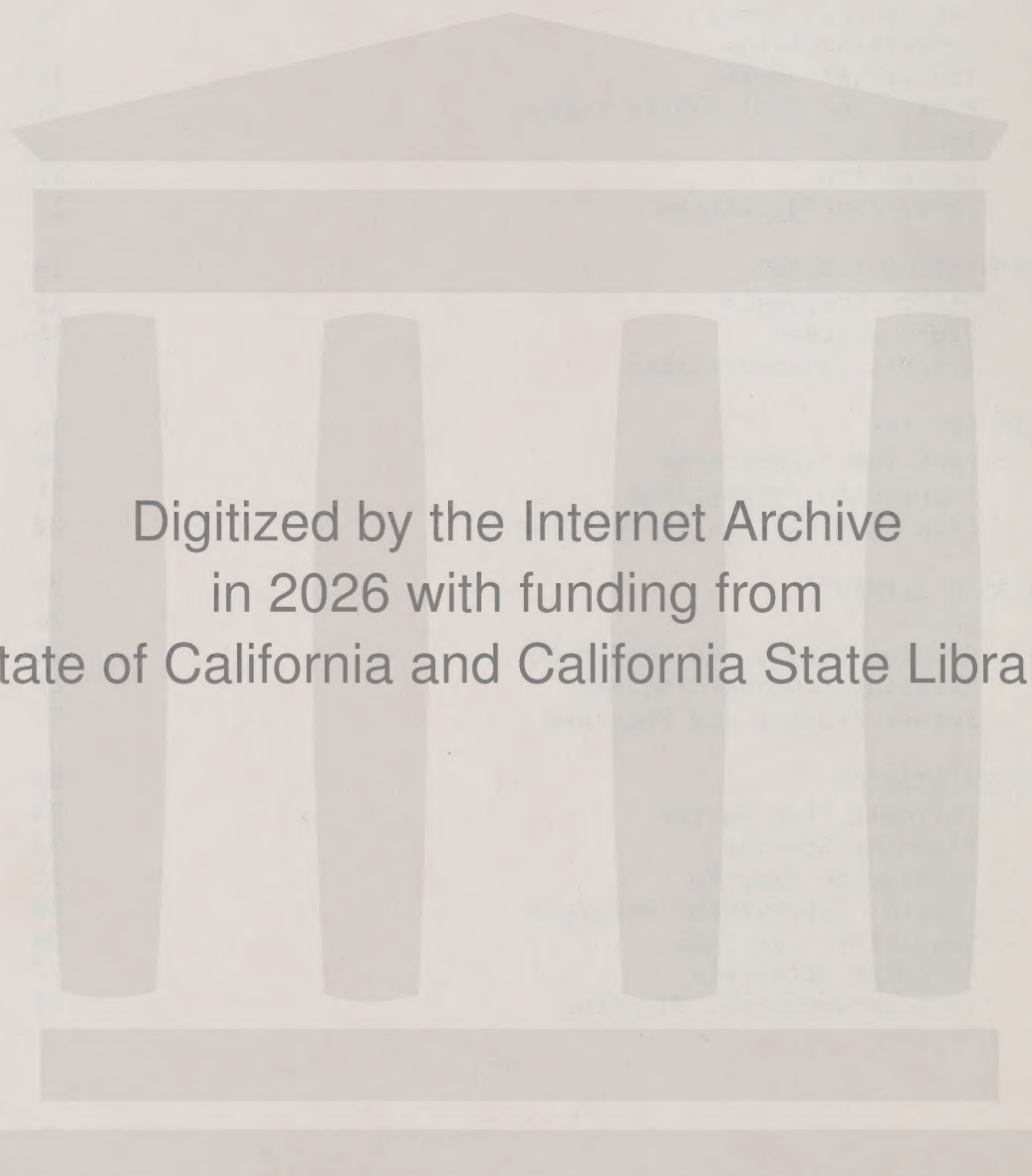
Consultants to the City

[Costa Mesa Planning
Commission]
City planning Costa Mesa

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THE COSTA MESA GENERAL PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This report, together with the General Plan map, constitutes the Costa Mesa General Plan. The plan is largely based on a planning program initiated by the City of Costa Mesa in February 1970. At that time the City contracted with the consulting firm of Wilsey & Ham to prepare a city-wide general plan and a redevelopment plan for the downtown area. Economics Research Associates was retained to assist Wilsey & Ham by providing economic analyses, land market studies and population projections. This report summarizes General Plan proposals developed by the consulting firms in connection with the overall planning program.

The General Plan: Its Scope

The General Plan represents the desire of the City through the planning process to take advantage of development potentials and cope with the complex dynamics of long-range city growth. The General Plan is designed to guide future development of Costa Mesa in a desirable and efficient manner and provide a basis for public decisions regarding the development of community resources, the expenditure of public funds, and the allocation of land for various purposes. The General Plan is essentially a statement of public development policy. As the word "general" implies, it does not precisely define community development but, rather, establishes a framework within which growth, development, and change should take place in accord with community goals and aspirations.

The General Plan for the City of Costa Mesa has been developed for a planning area generally bounded on the west by the Santa Ana River; on the north by the City limits of Costa Mesa; and on the east and south by the Orange County Airport and the City of Newport Beach. Certain unincorporated areas in close proximity to the City have been included in the planning area. The General Plan projects population growth, housing requirements, land use patterns and circulation systems to 1990. The General Plan report and map is intended to meet the minimum requirements of the State Planning Law.

The General Plan: Its Elements

In legal terms, the General Plan is defined in the State Planning Law as "...a comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical

development of the ... city, and of any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relationship to its planning."* The plan "shall consist of a statement of development policies and shall include a diagram or diagrams and text setting forth objectives, principles, standards and plan proposals. The plan shall include the following elements:

- (a) A land use element which designates the proposed general distribution and general location and extent of the uses of the land for housing, business, industry, agriculture, natural resources, recreation, education, public buildings and grounds, and other categories of public and private uses of land. The land use element shall include a statement of the standards of population density and building intensity recommended for the various districts and other territory covered by the plan.
- (b) A circulation element consisting of the general location and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, terminals, and other local public utilities and facilities, all correlated with the land use element of the plan.
- (c) A housing element consisting of standards and plans for the improvement of housing and for provision of adequate sites for housing. This element of the plan shall endeavor to make adequate provision for the housing needs of all economic segments of the community."**

The General Plan may also include other elements relating to long-term urban growth and planning. However, in terms of stated City of Costa Mesa objectives the current planning program has been confined to the development of a long-term plan to 1990 containing the land use, circulation and housing elements described above.

* Section 65300 of the Government Code of the State of California
**Section 65302 of the Government Code of the State of California

The General Plan, once adopted by the City, should not act as a fixed, static document. State law provides that the General Plan can be amended by the Planning Commission and City Council in the same manner that it is adopted. Generally, the adoption and amendment procedure requires successive affirmative votes by both the Planning Commission and City Council following public hearings.

The General Plan: Its Functions

The General Plan for Costa Mesa sets forth City goals and policies related to long-range growth of the community. As such, it provides a guide for the evaluation of significant future development proposals and should serve the following purposes:

1. To express the quality of physical environment sought by citizens of the community.
2. To provide sufficient information about the long-range goals of the community to enable public and private enterprise to coordinate their planning activities and developmental programs.
3. To provide technical knowledge about the resources of the area and about the potentials for growth and change which may be anticipated.
4. To identify and propose solutions to possible problem areas which will arise due to changes in the direction, pace or intensity of development within the next 20 years.
5. To provide the Planning Commission and City Council with an essential perspective for decision-making with respect to zoning, subdivisions, and related matters.
6. To facilitate City Council considerations of future public investments, capital improvement programs and other fiscal programs related to future urban development.

In terms of the overall planning program for Costa Mesa, the General Plan provides a framework for more specialized and in-depth planning studies. Once again, the plan should not be viewed as a rigid document. The program developed by consultants to the City

must be viewed as an initial step in the long-range planning process. Community goals and aspirations may require revisions of the plan. More intensive planning and development studies will be needed to deal with specific environmental and social concerns within the community.

Basis for the Plan

The General Plan has been based on a series of studies related to long-term economic and population growth, existing development patterns, projected traffic volumes and movements, demands on future public and semi-public facilities and regional development considerations. The Plan reflects a balanced consideration of development potentials and constraints identified to date in the planning process.

The Plan relies heavily on 1990 projections of population and land use markets prepared by Economics Research Associates. In developing the land use element an attempt was made to meet future long-term land demands for housing, industrial, commercial, office and hotel facilities. It should be stressed, however, that the market demand for various land use categories will exceed the supply of developable land in the current city limits of Costa Mesa by 1990. Consequently, it was necessary to weigh development objectives and options in allocating long-term land use categories.

The distribution of land uses in the Plan is conditioned by existing use patterns and conditions and the locations of key areas with potentials for new development or redevelopment. Large areas of Costa Mesa are today developed with uses which can, and should, be maintained as stable, high-quality living and working environments through the planning period. These areas, as well as public use areas and certain industrial and commercial complexes undergoing development, constitute long-range development "fixes." Therefore, the Plan focus is centered on key areas characterized by large, vacant parcels; deep-lots susceptible to more intensive development; and mixed-use development patterns. Reasonable attainment of market demands within the land use element depends on use or reuse of these lands.

Land allocations in the Plan are further influenced by projected traffic volumes and the adequacy of the planned circulation system to accommodate existing and future traffic generators. Circulation problems in Costa Mesa constitute serious restraints on future development patterns. Even on the completion of the Newport and Corona Del Mar Freeways, there will be difficult problems in

meeting future traffic demands on several highways in the area. The circulation element proposed in the Plan is designed to provide for anticipated volumes and movements. The system will require continuing analysis in terms of serving land use proposals. It will also be studied in greater depth within the redevelopment area during subsequent phases of the overall planning program.

Finally, the Plan was affected by the adequacy of existing and proposed community facilities and public works improvements. Proposed use areas and population distributions were reviewed to determine their general effect on current planning programs.

LAND USE ELEMENT

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Residential proposals of the General Plan fall into three major density categories: 1) Low Density areas designed primarily for single-family residences; 2) Medium Density areas which will reflect a mix of detached and attached single-family dwellings and low-rise apartments developed at relatively low apartment densities; and 3) High Density areas which are set aside for both walk-up and high-rise apartments at densities consistent with current development trends.

The Plan sets aside 2,620 net acres for low-density residential development and 505 net acres for medium-density residential use. Another 845 net acres are allocated in the Plan for high-density apartment development. The residential areas of the Plan are expected to accommodate a population of between 114,500 and 120,000 by 1990.

1. Low-Density Residential Uses

The low-density residential category is designed to accommodate a wide variety of existing and future single-family residences developed at densities reaching a maximum of 7.9 dwelling units per net acre. Attached, townhouse and cluster units along with smaller-lot single-family housing areas characteristic of some older areas of the City will be developed at the upper limits of the density range. While many of the existing and emerging single-family areas in Costa Mesa are developed at lower densities, the projected overall average density in this residential category should closely approximate 6.5 dwelling per acre.

The low-density residential category has been applied to the existing single-family housing areas in Costa Mesa which are in good condition and can be clearly maintained as stable living environments through the planning period. New, low-density residential development areas have largely been designated for vacant acreages north of the San Diego Freeway and in the vicinity of Adams Avenue and the Santa Ana River. In these areas the City should consider the use of planned unit development procedures and controls in obtaining high environmental quality.

There is a growing acceptance of cluster and townhouse housing developments which can often provide increased amenities and meet

environmental design objectives in a manner superior to that obtained in conventional subdivision development.

2. Medium-Density Residential Uses

This housing category is intended for a mix of detached dwellings and low-rise apartment structures in a density range of 8 to 15 dwelling units per net acre. Apartments would be generally characterized by duplex, triplex, quad and one- to two-story apartments developed on a lot, rather than a large complex basis.

While individual developments would often attain, or even exceed, the top of the density range, the average, overall density of this housing category should approach 13 dwelling units per net acre by the target date for the Plan. The average density would be reduced by the presence of a number of single-family units and two-family uses on relatively large lots. Areas within the medium-density residential category often represent older, lower-density housing undergoing a transition to higher intensity uses. Experience in other cities would indicate that redevelopment is slow because of original investments and the economics of conversion.

Development policies and controls in the medium-density areas should encourage the assembly of contiguous lots to provide for larger-scale, higher-quality apartment development than is possible on an individual lot basis. In some key areas, such as the potential marina area in the vicinity of 19th Street and the Santa Ana River, high-rise units could ultimately be developed in conjunction with lower-density housing under planned unit development procedures.

3. High-Density Residential Uses

The high-density apartment area sets aside land for multiple residential uses at a density range of 15 to 30 dwelling units per net acre. The area would accommodate two and three-story apartments typical of current construction trends as well as higher-rise apartments geared to special housing markets, e.g., the elderly, students, higher income groups.

The General Plan anticipates that the high-density residential area will be developed at an average density of 20 units per net acre. Apartments built at maximum densities will be offset by lower-density complexes and the inclusion of many existing, low-density, older areas which will undergo slow conversion to more intensive development.

Planned high-density apartment areas are located in close proximity to activity centers, transportation routes, and recreational or cultural uses. Accessibility to commercial shopping areas and employment centers is stressed.

The largest concentration of high-density uses is proposed in the older section of the City south of the extensive east-west belt of public and semi-public uses and open spaces extending across the community. In this area, apartment development will occur through replacement and conversion of existing lower-intensity residential uses. Other major apartment centers are proposed in the following areas: 1) adjacent to the South Coast Plaza shopping center; 2) within the triangle formed by the San Diego, Corona Del Mar and Newport Freeways; 3) adjacent to commercial facilities on Harbor Boulevard along Adams Avenue and Baker Street; and 4) along the east side of Newport Boulevard north of 19th Street.

Four high-density areas will involve a conversion of existing non-residential uses to apartment use. Three of these areas will involve conversion of mixed industrial uses to apartment development: 1) Placentia Avenue between Victoria Street and 19th Street; 2) Victoria Street and Valley; and 3) Baker Street east of Harbor Boulevard. Each of these areas will require more precise plans and programs to achieve desired transitions in use and avert mixed marginal development. The fourth area, located along the east side of Newport Boulevard, will involve the replacement of mixed commercial and low-density residential uses with high-density apartments. The conversion process in this area will be strongly conditioned by the development of the Newport Freeway.

The possibility of establishing a residential category to accommodate central area apartments built at densities exceeding 30 units per acre was seriously considered in the preparation of the Plan. However, serious constraints imposed by the capacity of the circulation system and the lack of a public transit system tend to discourage application of very high-density districts except on a highly selective basis. Further study will be directed to this issue in connection with redevelopment area studies and the TOPICS program.

COMMERCIAL AREAS

Three types of commercial areas are shown on the General Plan: 1) neighborhood shopping; 2) general commercial areas; and 3) commercial centers. Neighborhood shopping centers are small, well-defined commercial areas designed to serve local convenience and service needs of adjacent residential areas. General commercial areas represent both highway-oriented and convenience shopping developments which, in Costa Mesa, are typically found in mixed form in commercial strips along arterials. Commercial centers designate major shopping, service and office facilities which serve city-wide and regional markets.

The Plan allocates approximately 700 net acres for commercial development. While the Plan allocates somewhat less commercial land than projected by ERA, it is believed that the Plan proposals are reasonable in terms of future growth and limitations imposed by physical factors, competitive centers and traffic system consideration.

1. Neighborhood Shopping

Neighborhood shopping centers are proposed in locations within the City which are well-defined sites serving local residential convenience needs. It must be recognized that many neighborhood services are provided in general commercial strip developments.

2. General Commercial Areas

The largest allocation of commercial land within the Plan is contained in extensive developments extending along major traffic carriers. Attempts in the planning process to distinguish between highway-oriented use areas (containing such uses as automobile dealerships, furniture stores, and restaurants), shoppers goods stores, service establishments, and offices were discarded. The Plan recognizes the diversity of these general commercial areas but would propose that attempts be made to cluster compatible activities and create in-depth development of strips at key intersections along streets such as Harbor Boulevard, 19th Street and 17th Street. Further extensions of commercial strips should be averted along arterials not designated for general commercial use on the Plan.

3. Commercial Centers

Three major commercial centers serving city-wide and regional commercial needs are shown: 1) the South Coast Plaza shopping center; 2) the older commercial center focused on the Harbor Boulevard-Newport Boulevard intersection; and 3) the developing shopping area located at Harbor Boulevard and Adams Avenue. Each of these centers varies considerably in size and scale of development. Nevertheless, they all are characterized by diversity and intensity of commercial shops, services and facilities. They provide space for offices, entertainment and various ancillary uses. As such, they constitute the most significant activity centers in the community.

INDUSTRIAL AREAS

Three major industrial areas, containing a total of 935 acres, are proposed on the General Plan. Two industrial development categories are utilized: 1) Industrial Parks, designed for planned, large-site research, manufacturing, office and industrial development; and 2) Light Industry, set aside for a variety of manufacturing, distribution, and service industries developed intensively on smaller sites. The Plan assumes an average employee density of 20 employees per net acre in accordance with ERA projections.

1. Industrial Parks

Two industrial park areas are proposed. The first is located on a portion of the Segerstrom properties on the north side of the San Diego Freeway at Harbor Boulevard. The second area is part of the Irvine industrial complex situated on the east side of the Newport Freeway between the San Diego and Corona Del Mar Freeways.

Both of these areas have experienced substantial development but contain large, vacant sites which can accommodate future industrial expansion. Development is characterized by freeway-oriented industries and offices occupying large sites within a planned environment providing for adequate highway and local service access, ample off-street parking, landscaping and controls over exterior design and operations. Current high standards of development should be maintained as these industrial parks are progressively developed during the planning period. The two areas will constitute highly important employment centers serving Costa Mesa and the region.

2. Light Industry

The major allocation of light industrial lands is concentrated in the older, industrial section of the City lying generally south of 18th Street and west of Newport Boulevard. The area is today generally occupied by manufacturing and service industries located on relatively small sites. Industrial uses are interspersed with older residential development and commercial uses in a mixed pattern.

The Plan proposes sufficient area in the southwest area to provide for expansion of industrial uses through conversion and redevelopment of other uses during the planning period. Development policies and controls in the area should encourage land assembly and provide for future provision of street improvements, adequate off-street parking and better design quality. The area is currently unattractive and suffers from access and parking problems. Many of the problem areas can be overcome through programmed improvements and regulatory controls based on more precise development plans. The area can continue to serve an increasingly important function as a development complex for incubator industries and smaller manufacturing and service establishments.

A small industrial area located around Bristol and Baker Streets has also been retained in the Plan for light industrial use. This area has been partially developed with small industrial and service establishments.

PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC AREAS

The General Plan indicates a considerable acreage of land for public and semi-public uses such as governmental offices, hospitals, educational institutions, cemeteries and similar functions. The Plan shows major use areas and facilities such as the Fairview State Hospital, Fairgrounds, Orange Coast College, and the Civic Center as continuing institutional resources through the planning period. Smaller institutional uses in various areas of the City are not separately identified but, rather, are included within overall use classifications.

The broad belt of public and semi-public uses shown extending east-west across the City constitutes an important resource area for the focus of community-wide interest and activities. This belt of land is not yet fully utilized and large open areas remain.

The City should view the area as a public use reserve or public "land bank" which should be maintained for future public, institutional and cultural uses. The area can support new and expanded facilities on sites large enough to permit good design, inter-connecting open spaces and a high-quality environment. Future cultural, educational and public recreation facilities can be integrated with civic center and public use functions to create a diverse, community activity center which few cities have been able to achieve.

EDUCATION

The General Plan sets aside roughly 450 net acres for long-range development of the public school system. The projected system is largely based on school plans developed by the Newport Mesa Unified School District. The Plan indicates two high schools, six intermediate schools and twenty-five elementary schools to serve the 1990 population. Based on current planning standards and population trends, the capacities of existing and proposed sites should accommodate future enrollments. Greatest student growth pressures should occur in intermediate and high schools as the population ages over the years ahead.

The Plan indicates the location of Orange Coast College and Southern California College but includes smaller educational facilities within designated residential and commercial use areas.

RECREATION

The Plan allocates land for two types of parks: 1) community parks, which offer a wide variety of recreational facilities and activities serving city-wide and community recreation demands; and 2) neighborhood parks, designed to serve local areas having populations of four to six thousand persons. The General Plan proposals are largely based on standards and criteria employed in the Costa Mesa Parks and Recreation planning program. The adopted park plan for Costa Mesa calls for a maintenance of a standard of between 1.25 and 2 acres of parks per 1,000 population. This standard is considered minimal in terms of growing demands for recreational facilities and the probability that virtually all vacant lands will be absorbed by urban development by 1990.

Community Parks

The Plan proposes that three new community recreation sites be acquired and developed. These sites would supplement the two existing City-owned and one City-operated community parks. One site is proposed at the toe of the mesa between 19th and Victoria Streets. A second large site would be located on the west side of the Municipal Golf Course. The third new community park has been designated on the north side of the San Diego Freeway between Fairview Road and Bear Street. In locating the latter park, consideration should be given to a site adjoining the freeway in order to provide an open-space buffer between the freeway and adjacent residential development. In the redevelopment program for the central area, the impact of the Newport Freeway alignment and development proposals on the functioning of Costa Mesa Community Park will be further assessed.

Neighborhood Parks

The Plan allocates an additional sixteen neighborhood parks (including four combined school-park sites) to serve local neighborhoods. The new neighborhood facilities would require an additional 40 to 50 acres of land.

No attempt has been made to designate small recreational facilities which are increasingly being developed in connection with residential complexes. While these small-scale recreational and open space areas provide varied recreational opportunities and facilities, they are restricted to resident use. Nevertheless, their development under planned unit development procedures should be encouraged since they will help to relieve pressures on limited public park facilities. Privately-sponsored recreational facilities are not a substitute for public parks; however, they can serve many active and passive recreational needs within the City.

Golf Courses

The existing public and private golf courses in Costa Mesa should be maintained through the planning period. Their value as recreational areas will, perhaps, be exceeded in the future by their contribution as visual open spaces and breathing areas within the urban area.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Police and Fire Protection

The existing Police Department facility within the Costa Mesa Civic Center is well located to serve the City and should adequately serve the community during the planning period.

This facility was developed to provide adequate space for a Police Department of 250 personnel and to serve a city of twice the size of the existing population.

In the event that Harbor Area Court facilities are located in or near the civic center, additional detention facilities and underground or covered pedestrian walkways will be needed.

There are four existing fire stations now serving the City. The Fire Department indicated that existing facilities will adequately satisfy fire protection criteria for the immediate population. Growth factors will require additional Fire Department facilities. The Fire Department Master Plan indicates an additional two stations within the next 7 to 10 years. It is anticipated that the City will ultimately be served by 7 stations having multiple companies. The older Rochester Fire Station will be relocated in the near future. Because of questions related to east-west access across the Newport Freeway, the Rochester Station relocation decisions should be deferred until precise freeway designs are finalized.

Libraries

The General Plan would propose that four public libraries be developed by 1990. The two existing facilities now serving Costa Mesa are classed as community libraries, which are designed to serve from 25,000 to 30,000 persons. On that basis, the future population of Costa Mesa would warrant two additional branch, or community, libraries by 1990.

Corporation Yard

The Plan proposes that the City Corporation Yard be expanded in its present location on Placentia Avenue and Joann Street. While the existing yard will soon be inadequate, there is adjacent acreage leased from the State of California which can apparently be converted to maintenance and storage use.

CIRCULATION ELEMENT

The General Plan shows a transportation network of freeways, thoroughfares, and collectors designed to serve the growing circulation needs of the City of Costa Mesa throughout the planning period. This network is combined of "freeways," "major" streets (120' R/W), "primary" streets (100' R/W), and "secondary" streets (80' R/W) as defined by both Orange County and Costa Mesa highway plans.

SYSTEM PROPOSALS

There will be four regional freeways serving the Costa Mesa area. These freeways, and their anticipated completion dates, are as follows: San Diego (constructed), Corona Del Mar (1973-74), Newport (1975-77), and Pacific Coast (1975-77). Ultimately, the City may be served by the Orange Freeway (Route 57); however, route studies will require two to four years and the construction of this freeway would not occur till late in the 1980's. Therefore, the Orange Freeway was not considered in developing the circulation element. Freeway interchange locations shown on the Plan are diagrammatic and based on current plans.

The General Plan requires the following streets to be developed to major street standards: Harbor, Fairview, Bristol, Palisades, Bear, Adams, and vital portions of 17th Street, Placentia and Sunflower Avenues. This major street network requires support by the following key primary streets: Talbert, Sunflower Avenue, Anton, Baker, Fair, Del Mar, Tustin, Irvine, Atlanta, Red Hill, Superior, 17th Street, 19th Street, a portion of Victoria Street, and the Estancia Drive extension.

The streets classified and designated on the Plan will serve future traffic volumes and movements anticipated as a result of development projected by the General Plan. The designation of streets within the planned circulation network was based on: 1) the General Plan and its proposed uses and densities of development; 2) projected traffic volumes derived from studies of the California Division of Highways, Los Angeles Rapid Transit District, Orange County, and the City of Costa Mesa; 3) review of the planned regional freeway system and the highway plans of adjacent jurisdictions; and 4) discussions with public officials regarding both existing plans and current planning programs.

PROBLEM AREAS

Critical circulation problems could develop during the planning period due primarily to: 1) intensification of existing traffic problems, 2) increased land use density and population resulting in development of additional congestion and loading of the system, and 3) physical and economic constraints imposed on improvement of the circulation network.

There are basically five main problem areas that can be anticipated at this time. They are:

1. High traffic demands along north-south corridors such as Harbor Boulevard and Fairview Road.
2. Lack of an adequate number of arterials crossing the Santa Ana River to serve east-west traffic demands.
3. Congestion of traffic within the high-trip-generation triangular zone bounded by the San Diego and Newport Freeways and Harbor Boulevard.
4. Traffic congestion caused by planned large-scale industrial development and the South Coast Plaza regional shopping center located north of the San Diego Freeway.
5. Intersection congestion and high traffic volumes in the 17th Street and 19th Street/Newport Freeway area.

The first problem area, lack of north-south corridors, cannot be solved by additional highways immediately parallel and adjacent to Harbor Boulevard and Fairview Road, since right-of-way acquisition would certainly be too costly. If a major highway or freeway is ultimately constructed west of the Santa Ana River, externally-generated through trips will be greatly diminished, resulting in relief of present north-south corridors. Bear and Bristol Streets, although they are not continuous throughout the City, will help carry rapidly increasing volumes. Nevertheless, traffic volumes will strain the capacities of Harbor and Fairview.

The second problem stems from the lack of sufficient arterials crossing the Santa Ana River. East-west traffic volumes are primarily to be carried by Adams Avenue in the northerly area and Victoria Street at the southerly end of the City. To help reduce the loads on these streets, Baker and 19th Streets should be improved to primary classifications, and Wilson to a secondary type. Although the Adams Avenue river crossing was recently widened, the

volumes on Adams Avenue will apparently exceed its capacity. The Hamilton/Victoria Street crossing will probably require widening in three or four years, while the Wilson/Atlanta crossing construction will depend on the rate and extent of development in the vicinity. The 19th Street crossing will apparently not be warranted for some time. The Sunflower Avenue crossing, as well, is not expected for at least ten years. The Talbert Avenue crossing should adequately handle the localized volumes in the northerly area for quite some time.

It will be a prudent policy for the City to obtain as many Santa Ana River crossings as possible, as quickly as possible. The Adams Avenue alignment between the Santa Ana River and Harbor Boulevard will require special treatment because of projected overloads. Detailed studies should be undertaken to determine the desirability of special access control and possible grade separations which may be necessary if the highway is to fulfill its stringent traffic load requirements.

The third problem involves general overall traffic congestion within the triangular section of the City bounded by the two northerly freeways and Harbor Boulevard. Ingress and egress from this triangle and internal movements are complicated by freeway crossings and the changeover in east and west side street grid patterns when transitioning Newport Boulevard. Two projects to improve downtown movements would involve the extension of Santa Isabel Avenue across Newport Boulevard to join Vanguard (extended) and the connection of Del Mar with Fair Drive. Both projects would enhance the traffic flow to and from major generators, the Orange County Fairgrounds, Orange Coast College, Southern California College Civic Center, as well as the Fairview State Hospital and other points beyond the triangle. Additional relief along the Newport Freeway leg will be provided by the planned Mesa Drive, Wilson Street, Fairview Road, Bay Street and Harbor Boulevard overcrossings, as well as the Fair Drive, Victoria Street, and Harbor Boulevard interchanges.

Traffic congestion in the vicinity of the South Coast Shopping Center, the fourth problem area, will be partially relieved by development of Bear and Bristol Streets as major highways and construction of Sunflower Avenue and Anton Boulevard as primaries. The Bear Street interchange on the Corona Del Mar Freeway, complemented by the Bristol Street interchange on the San Diego Freeway, should handle the volumes from the large, high-density residential, industrial, and commercial development centered around the San Diego Freeway alignment.

The fifth critical is centered in the vicinity of 17th Street, 19th Street, and the Newport Freeway. Intersection congestion could occur due to large traffic volumes and high turning movements, since this area is a downtown/freeway interface and focal point. This downtown end of the City is to be served by freeway overcrossings at Placentia Avenue, 18th Street, and 19th Street. The major interchange will be of the partial cloverleaf type constructed at 17th Street. Freeway geometrics and interchange locations are subject to further study.

To handle traffic resulting from the 17th Street interchange, the circulation plan shows 17th Street developed as a major street and realigned across the freeway to provide a well-designed correction of the current offset alignment. The 17th Street major highway designation would terminate at Placentia Avenue. In addition, the section of Placentia Avenue from 17th Street to 19th Street is designated as a major highway. This planned development is proposed to adequately serve the 17th - 19th Street high-density residential, industrial, and commercial developments. Specific design proposals should be the subject of a detailed study and should be considered in connection with the redevelopment area program. A primary difficulty in the 17th Street area, and other major portions of Costa Mesa as well, is the fact that few streets are continuous and at major intersections both the through volumes and turning movements are so great that only congestion and traffic conflict can result.

The basic street pattern of Costa Mesa is established, and in some areas of the City it cannot be altered. As traffic volumes increase, even beyond the planning period, it will be necessary to keep the City's arterials operating in an efficient and economical manner. The development of the freeway system will remove the greater portion of the externally-originated vehicle trips from City streets. Nevertheless, remaining trips could be of sufficient magnitude to cause further difficulty.

A continuing program of basic arterial system studies and improvements will be required to provide for phased street construction, street widening, channelization, signalization, turning lanes, traffic control priorities in peak hour, parking restrictions and off-street parking. Traffic studies will also be required when future development plans for Orange County Airport are finalized since the functions and levels of operation of the airport will directly affect surface transportation demands.

TRANSIT CONSIDERATIONS

The circulation element of the General Plan is designed to accommodate projected traffic demands in a reasonable manner. Ultimately, however, intensive urban development throughout Costa Mesa, Newport Beach, Irvine, Santa Ana and Huntington Beach will generate enormous demands on the regional and community street networks. Serious problems will defy practical solution through reliance on highway construction and traffic engineering ingenuity. Costs of right-of-way acquisition and construction will become excessive in terms of benefits to the system. Other transportation alternatives must be developed.

The City should move toward the development of transit systems at two levels. The design of a regional system to serve long-term needs should be considered in concert with other communities and agencies. In the shorter-run period the City should determine the feasibility of establishing a local bus system linking major traffic generators. The system could be developed along major highways to serve the downtown area, major shopping centers, industrial parks, high-density apartment areas and institutional complexes. While the system would probably divert only a portion of projected trips, it could relieve traffic flows on the highway system and serve special groups within the community who either have limited use of automobiles or who would prefer to use a bus system for various trips. Specific proposals for a system would be premature at this point. The City should initiate studies to determine possible alternatives, service levels and costs. In this regard, subsidy of a localized bus system may prove in the long run to be less costly than capital expenditures for highway acquisition, construction and control facilities.

PLAN SUMMARY

LAND USE ALLOCATIONS

The allocations of land to each use category within the General Plan are summarized in Table 1 below. The table provides a comparison between General Plan land allocations and land market projections for 1990 prepared by Economics Research Associates.

TABLE 1

LAND USE ALLOCATIONS: 1990

<u>Use Category</u>	<u>General Plan (Net Acres)</u>	<u>Projected Market Demand (Net Acres)</u>
Residential		
Low Density	2,621	)
Medium Density	505	) 3,752
High Density	847	651
Total Residential	<u>3,973</u>	<u>4,403</u>
Commercial	702	848
Industrial	<u>935</u>	<u>1,212</u>
Total Developable	5,610	6,463
Institutional and Public	1,775	1,775
Streets and Freeways	<u>2,310</u>	<u>2,310</u>
Total	9,695	10,548

The General Plan allocations are based on the City's current land area of 9,695 acres. In comparing the Plan allocations with ERA market projections, it must be kept in mind that forecasted market demands exceed the total area of Costa Mesa. In effect, the demand for land, based on employment and population projections, will exceed the supply of land. Consequently, the Plan allocations do not (and cannot) match the market demands for each major use.

category. The imbalance in development categories is accentuated by increases in lands required for streets, highways and institutional uses during the planning period. Total developable land available for residential, commercial and industrial uses will approximate 5,610 acres by 1990 as opposed to market demands for 6,460 acres.

The Plan allocates a higher proportion of land to high-density residential use and a lower proportion of land to low- and medium-density residential use than is projected by ERA. These allocations were necessary in order to meet overall housing demands created by employment and population growth. The high-density areas will provide a reservoir for future development of housing beyond the planning period since they will not be developed at maximum densities by 1990. It is also assumed that the proposed apartment areas will tend to meet future housing needs in a more adequate manner than would be possible through maximum allocation for low density residential uses. That is, multiple-residential areas should offer greater choice in dwelling type and housing cost for many special housing groups such as the aged, students, young married couples and individuals.

The Plan allocates less industrial land than market projections would indicate. Industrial development areas were based on a number of physical and traffic circulation limitations. Some existing, industrial pockets are proposed for conversion to other uses although these areas will be subjected to further study. However, it should be recognized that the excess industrial demand could be satisfied by lands adjacent to Costa Mesa, such as the industrial area designated adjacent to the Orange County Airport.

Market demands for commercial development exceed the Plan allocations. However, the Plan assumes a higher intensity of development within future commercial areas. The Plan also tends to understate commercial acreage since some commercial activity will tend to persist in areas designated for other uses.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

The General Plan will support a population of 114,500 to 120,000 by the year 1990, depending on density and family size factors employed in deriving the population range.

A "low" estimate of 114,500 is derived from ERA projections: 1) a combined density of 6.5 units per net acre in single-family, duplex and triplex areas; 2) a density of 20 units per net acre in high-density apartment areas; and 3) an average family size of 3.07 persons per dwelling unit. The "high" estimate of 120,000 is based on somewhat revised factors: 1) a density of 6.5 units per net acre in low-density residential areas; 2) a density of 13 units per net acre in medium-density areas; 3) a density of 20 units per net acre in high-density apartment areas; 4) an average family size of 3.2 persons per dwelling unit in low-density residential units; 5) an average family size of 3.0 persons per dwelling unit in medium-density units; and 6) an average family size of 2.7 persons per dwelling unit in high-density apartment units.

It is believed that the latter set of estimating factors is better suited for general planning purposes. The average density in projected medium-density development areas should increase over current densities as conversion and new development occurs. The average family size in Costa Mesa should decrease as the overall population ages and greater proportions of the population are housed in apartment units. The typical household size in apartments will be much lower than in low-density units because of the large proportion of individuals, childless couples, and small families residing in apartments.

SOME IMPLICATIONS OF THE PLAN

The ERA projections of land markets make it quite clear that a number of development options are open to the City in establishing future development policies, programs and controls. Allocations of land could be adjusted to maximize certain types of development. Higher-density apartment development could be encouraged in order to free areas for other uses. It must be emphasized, however, that none of these decisions can be made without considering costs to the community.

The General Plan assumes that substantial increases in development intensities and redevelopment of key, older areas will occur through the planning period. Large capital costs will be involved in improving the major circulation system and supporting community facilities. Flood control, drainage and sewerage facilities will require substantial improvements in order to accommodate development envisioned in the Plan. While the Santa Ana River will

necessitate major flood control improvements regardless of future urban growth, there are a number of drainage deficiencies within the City which will be intensified by further building. A recent sewer deficiency study indicates that the older, southern sections will have sewage problems during the next ten to fifteen years. As densities increase in these areas, improvements of the sewer systems will become mandatory.

Local areas designated for higher-intensity use will also require substantial improvements. Consequently, decisions to capture full market potentials through more intensive development of the City must be carefully weighed against increased costs for public facilities and services and effects on the living and working environment.

HOUSING ELEMENT

The land use element of the General Plan describes allocations, locations and densities of housing areas needed to serve the future population of Costa Mesa. It is closely integrated with the following housing element which sets forth goals, programs and proposals to provide for future housing needs of the community. Both elements of the plan rely heavily on market studies and projections provided to the City in reports prepared by Economic Research Associates.

The housing element is designed to meet several basic objectives. First, it sets forth general housing goals related to residential environments and the provision of adequate housing to meet future housing demands. Second, it evaluates existing and anticipated housing conditions and the adequacy of the housing supply in terms of the local and regional market. Third, it reviews existing City programs designed to monitor and maintain good quality housing in Costa Mesa. Finally, the housing element indicates further studies and programs related to the quality and quantity of the housing supply which should be undertaken by the City.

It must be recognized that a number of housing issues and problems cannot be considered and resolved on a purely local basis. Costa Mesa is but a part of a regional housing market encompassing Orange County and the Southern California area. The provision of housing to meet the needs of various population groups must be accomplished within the context of regional market analyses, policies and programs. Housing studies and programs being conducted in Orange County and through the Southern California Association of Governments will be essential in constructing a framework within which city governments can play cooperative, effective roles in meeting projected housing needs. At this point in time, the housing element for Costa Mesa must address itself to market conditions and needs which the City can effectively deal with on a localized basis.

GOALS

The following goals are deemed essential in establishing high-quality residential development, meeting housing needs, and shaping future community housing policies and programs.

1. Provision of housing accommodations which will provide a reasonable range of choice in terms of type, design and location.
2. Encouragement of residential developments which will meet the needs of families and individuals with specialized housing requirements.
3. Prevention of the spread of blight and deterioration with existing neighborhoods.
4. Development of residential areas with densities and housing types related to existing and proposed public facilities and services.
5. Protection of areas proposed for residential development from the encroachment of unrelated or incompatible uses.
6. Establishment of regulatory policies and controls which will encourage well-designed, planned residential developments and provide adequate open space, recreational facilities, off-street parking, circulation and environmental amenity within housing project areas.
7. Development of higher-density residential areas in close proximity to community facilities, such as public institutions, civic areas and cultural areas; commercial shopping and service facilities; and employment centers.
8. Development of plans and programs to effect an orderly transition in areas where non-residential or mixed land uses are to be converted to housing uses or where low-density residential uses are to be replaced by higher-intensity apartment development.
9. Establishment of housing policies dealing with the prevention of blight, the development of minimum housing standards, and maintenance of housing codes.

The various elements of the General Plan are designed to accommodate these goals through its allocation of uses, establishment of housing densities, and recommended development of the circulation system and supporting public facilities. The full attainment of housing goals will depend on specific housing programs, development policies and controls formulated within the context of the General Plan framework.

HOUSING SUPPLY AND CONDITION

The following section examines existing and projected housing inventories, the role of Costa Mesa in the regional housing market and the condition of the existing City housing supply.*

Table No. 2 shows dwelling unit trends and projections for Orange County, the Santa Ana Statistical Area, and Costa Mesa for the period 1960-1990. It indicates housing supply totals for these three areas over time and shows the relationship of Costa Mesa to the larger regional market of which it is a part. The table shows that the largest housing growth within Costa Mesa occurred in the decade of the 60's when just under 12,000 dwelling units were constructed. Because vacant land will be less available for new construction and because other areas of the County will be undergoing development, the projections indicate that Costa Mesa will be playing a somewhat less significant future role in supplying dwelling units for both Orange County and the Santa Ana Statistical Area. This is illustrated by the fact that the 12,973 units which existed in 1960 represented 5.7 percent of the Orange County inventory and 12.7 percent of the Santa Ana Statistical Area supply. Both of these shares are expected to decrease; by 1990 it is estimated that total dwelling units in Costa Mesa will only represent 4.5 percent of the total units in Orange County and but 6.3 percent of the Santa Ana Statistical Area housing supply. These trends emphasize that satisfaction of future housing demands within the region and Costa Mesa will depend highly on development patterns and policies within other areas.

Table No. 3, Inventory of Existing and Projected Residential Units to 1990, indicates that the major portion of the housing supply for Costa Mesa will still be relatively new in 1990. The General Plan projects a total of approximately 40,000 dwelling units in Costa Mesa by the end of the planning period. By 1990, only 3,000 units or seven percent of the total housing supply will be over 40 years old. At the same point in time, only 34 percent of the dwelling units within the City will be over 30 years old.

Many of the oldest dwelling units will be demolished or replaced through redevelopment to other uses or by higher-density residential developments. Consequently, the primary emphasis is maintaining.

*More detailed housing market analyses are provided by Economics Research Associates, Economic Report, City of Costa Mesa, April 1970.

TABLE 2

DWELLING UNIT TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

Area	TOTAL DWELLING UNITS			
	1960	1970	1980	1990
Orange County	226,940	450,400	703,100	880,700
Santa Ana Statistical Area	102,123	259,800	475,200	634,500
Costa Mesa	12,937 ¹	24,400 ²	32,000 ³	40,000 ³
Costa Mesa as a percent of:	1960	1970	1980	1990
Orange County	5.7	5.4	4.6	4.5
Santa Ana Statistical Area	12.7	9.4	6.7	6.3

¹Represents total units as of the end of the year.

²Estimated, January 1970.

³Projected figures from the Costa Mesa General Plan.

Source: Orange County Planning Department, October 1969, and
Wilsey & Ham

TABLE 3

INVENTORY OF EXISTING AND PROJECTED RESIDENTIAL UNITS
IN COSTA MESA TO 1990

<u>Years Built</u>	<u>Number of Dwelling Units</u>
Pre-1939	1,285
1940-1950	1,721
1950-1960	10,754
1960-1970	11,940
Units demolished since 1960	<u>-1,300</u>
Existing units, January 1970	24,400
Net additional units projected by General Plan to 1990*	<u>15,600</u>
Total Units: 1990*	40,000

*Based on factors employed in deriving the "high" population projection of 120,000.

Source: Orange County Planning Department and Wilsey & Ham, 1970

Housing quality must be placed on continuing conservation and maintenance programs. Redevelopment programs would be primarily directed toward selected areas with demonstrated re-use potentials.

Current investigations and City records indicate that deterioration or dilapidation of existing residences is relatively minor in extent. Since 1966 sixty residences have been demolished with 13 more planned for demolition in the immediate future. The majority of these demolitions have been replaced by new residential units. Demolitions have primarily involved smaller residences or farm structures on deep lots located in the older eastern and southern sections of the City. Deteriorating conditions are beginning to occur in the eastern and southern sections as well as one area located south of the Orange County Flood Control Channel midway between Fairview and the proposed Corona Del Mar Freeway. City agency investigations identify these "early warning" areas because of their high rates of fire alarm calls, complaints of fire hazards, violations of the building code, and observations that there is a lesser amount of structural maintenance in these areas.

Costa Mesa requires a three-pronged effort to insure a sound housing supply and adequate living environments in 1990. First, high standards of structural and site development must be maintained for all new dwellings built in the future. Second, a continuous conservation and rehabilitation program must be pursued in designated residential areas with regard to pre-1960 housing, especially in the older east and southern sections of the City. Finally, a "watch dog program" should be developed to arrest any deterioration which might occur in newer dwellings.

EXISTING HOUSING PROGRAMS

The City conducts a number of on-going programs which are designed to identify and arrest deterioration of residential areas and to develop plans and programs to improve living environments.

The Planning Department staff conducts land use surveys and planning studies regarding housing areas in the City. One example is the East Side Study published by the Planning Department in 1969. This study of the area encompassed by Orange Avenue, Mesa Drive, Newport Boulevard, and 19th Street examined in detail potential re-use of a primarily residential, 260-acre area. The study included a survey of existing housing conditions to determine which units the Department felt could be saved and which ones would probably have to be replaced over the years ahead.

The Planning Department also is currently studying the area bounded by the San Diego and Newport Freeways and the proposed Corona Del Mar Freeway. The Department is examining possible conversion of an area which contains substantial industrial development to one which is more oriented to multiple-family housing development. A preliminary re-use study has also been conducted in the unincorporated area northeast of the Santa Ana River and Victoria Street. Area studies such as these provide valuable information concerning existing housing in the City and point towards improvements needed to sustain and enhance residential areas.

City agencies conduct a number of programs aimed at fighting deterioration of residential areas. Both the Fire and Building and Safety Departments conduct inspection programs for home safety. These inspection programs have had good success in locating and correcting dangerous situations and eliminating dilapidated structures. In addition, public information programs, especially the schools, are coordinated by the Fire Marshal's office. These on-going programs have had measurable success and should be continued.

Also significant are the activities of the Citizens Beautification Committee and other civic groups who carry on programs which recognize residential property owners for their efforts in property improvement and maintenance. Programs such as these are important in that they involve citizens and stress self-help in maintaining good quality residences.

FUTURE STUDIES AND PROGRAMS

Several housing issues and problem areas will require further study if appropriate policies, plans and programs are to be developed and implemented. Following are studies and programs which are deemed essential.

An immediate and pressing problem will emerge in connection with the acquisition of the proposed Newport Freeway. While the precise alignment has not yet been adopted, there will be a number of residents, businesses, and industries who will be displaced by the freeway. Many individuals and firms will wish to remain in the Costa Mesa area. It is recommended that the City, in cooperation with the State Division of Highways, local civic organizations and affected property owners, develop a relocation program which can assist in the transition. Such a program should be closely related

to the redevelopment program for the downtown area where opportunities may be provided for relocation and reinvestment. The redevelopment program itself must be conditioned by city-wide housing market analyses and the role of the redevelopment area in meeting market projections.

Detailed U. S. Census population and housing data, expected to be available to cities by 1971, should provide the basis for an in-depth housing analysis. Such an analysis, coupled with previous Economics Research Associates' housing studies, will assist in testing general plan projections and in evaluating the specific housing needs of various population groups.

Special housing studies should be directed toward the identification of housing needs of lower income groups, students and the elderly. Analyses conducted by Economics Research Associates indicate that projected sales prices and rental ranges for Costa Mesa will make it difficult for many persons to obtain adequate housing. Larger households, in particular, must either accept smaller, less satisfactory quarters to remain within rental budgets or pay a disproportionate share of their income for housing. Families with less than \$10,000 annual income could not qualify for most sales housing projected. Consequently, studies should be undertaken at both the local and regional level to assess the problem and to develop programs which will encourage the housing industry to meet the identified housing needs of an important segment of the area's population.

Similar studies should be conducted with regard to student housing needs in connection with Orange Coast College and Southern California College. While Orange Coast College is heavily commuter-oriented, Southern California College provides some dormitory facilities on campus. Future demands for single and married student housing and the adequacy of existing and proposed on and off-campus facilities should be appraised.

The housing needs of elderly individuals and families should also be explored. This age group will become a progressively larger segment of the population during the planning period, and their needs and income levels will require special attention to ensure appropriate housing.

Other studies should be developed for areas which are proposed for conversion from mixed uses or industrial use to medium and high-density residential development. These areas include the Baker-Warehouse area easterly of the Harbor Boulevard frontage and the

Placentia Avenue frontages north of 19th Street. These areas will require very specific programs to assist in the development transition and ensure that mixed residential-industrial use will not occur. Programs will be needed to provide both a good environment for housing investment and the relocation of displaced industrial and commercial uses.

Redevelopment and relocation programs should also be initiated in the near future for the proposed expansion of industry in the southwestern section of the City. Such programs could provide alternative housing sites and facilities for residences to be displaced by industrial users and thereby ease, and probably hasten, the conversion process.

Finally, because of the regional aspects of the housing market, the City should actively participate in and support regional housing studies and programs designed to meet future housing demands. Such participation should extend not only to the Orange County housing element program but to other governmental, institutional and privately-sponsored programs which seek to develop housing programs for low to moderate income families and groups such as the elderly and students.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Costa Mesa General Plan program re-emphasizes the importance of a number of tools which the community has available to help direct future developments in desired patterns. These tools include the General Plan itself, zoning and subdivision regulations, capital improvements programs, conservation and redevelopment programs, and a number of programs designed to assist in the improvement of urban facilities, transportation systems and environmental quality. Many of these programs can be most effectively used in connection with specific plans and proposals developed within the broad framework of the General Plan. Some of the efforts to which the community should look in implementing the General Plan are summarized below.

PERIODIC PLAN REVIEW

Since the current General Plan was designed to only meet statutory requirements of the State Planning Act, research and analytical studies were confined in scope and depth. Certain development issues and problem areas identified in the planning program will require more intensive study during the years ahead. It is essential that further development and transportation studies be conducted in order to strengthen the General Plan and reflect development goals and policies of the community.

Over time new growth will occur, additional data will emerge and public values will change. Therefore, it is important that the General Plan be subject to periodic review and modification to assure that it is maintained as a useful reflection of long-range development goals, policies and standards. It is recommended that at least every five years the Planning Commission and City Council should undertake a comprehensive review and revision of the General Plan. Reviews of a less sweeping nature should provide for revisions needed to update portions of the Plan. Plan reviews should be designed to accommodate new or modified goals, policies and standards to guide long-range development and not merely record past zoning decisions.

PLANNING STUDIES

A number of General Plan development concepts involve re-use or intensification of specific areas or depend on future planning and

programming activities. The following programs should be undertaken to provide development plans and time-phased programs to implement significant General Plan proposals.

1. Central Redevelopment Area. Revitalization of the older central district centered on Harbor and Newport Boulevards should occur through staged redevelopment proposals emanating from the current planning program in the area. The program should result in designs and plans for land development, pedestrian and traffic circulation and parking facilities which will permit substantial improvement of this key commercial and housing area.
2. Mixed-Use Conversion Areas. Programs should be initiated to plan for the conversion of mixed industrial use areas to residential development in the following areas: 1) Placentia Avenue between 19th Street and Victoria Street; 2) Baker Street, east of the Harbor Boulevard frontage; 3) Victoria Street and Canyon; and 4) the area in the vicinity of Baker Street and Bristol. Zoning alone will not ensure orderly transitions. Programs must be developed to provide for staged development of viable residential projects and relocation of displaced uses.
3. Southwest Industrial Area. Precise plans and implementation programs should be instituted within the light industrial area proposed southerly of 19th Street. Programs should be directed toward measures to: 1) redevelop existing housing areas for industrial use; 2) consolidate small parcels to provide larger industrial sites; and 3) improve streets, parking facilities and site design within the area. The process of conversion should be expedited through programs to assist housing relocation.
4. Civic and Cultural Center. Planning studies should be conducted in the near future to determine desirable development and phasing of a civic-cultural-recreational complex related to current City Administration facilities on Fair Avenue. It is important that multi-use development of public and semi-public institutions be carefully integrated in an overall plan for the complex.

5. Freeway-related Areas. The City should work closely with the State Division of Highways in developing landscaping and signing programs and resolving potential freeway-impact problems resulting from freeway design, acquisition and construction within the City. Special attention should be directed to small, remnant parcels which may remain from freeway acquisition in order to determine those parcels which might be needed for public purposes and those which could be developed in conformity with City development standards.
6. Transportation Studies. While a continuing transportation planning program is essential, the City should direct major efforts toward studies to determine: 1) the feasibility of establishing a local bus system to relieve traffic demands on the planned circulation system; and 2) the future effects of Orange County Airport on development patterns and surface streets within the City. Costa Mesa should not only cooperate in the development of a regional transit system to meet long-term needs but should also consider a more localized bus system to link major traffic generators. Current airport planning programs and studies being conducted by Orange County and the City of Newport Beach should shortly provide Costa Mesa with a firm basis for the determination of future airport impacts and the formulation of appropriate policies, plans and study programs.

ANNEXATION PROGRAM

Logically, Costa Mesa should annex all lands within the study area shown on the General Plan map since they are functional, integral parts of the Costa Mesa community. These areas include: 1) the County island northeast of Victoria Street and the Santa Ana River; 2) the unincorporated strip adjacent to the San Diego Freeway between the proposed Corona Del Mar Freeway and the Newport Freeway; 3) the area encompassed by the Irvine Industrial Park, the proposed Corona Del Mar Freeway, the Orange County Airport and the San Diego Freeway; and 4) the unincorporated areas generally lying south of the proposed Corona Del Mar Freeway and west of the Irvine Avenue-Tustin Avenue alignments.

Successful annexation programs in these areas will remove pockets of unincorporated territory, consolidate City boundaries, and provide identification of areas which are functionally part of the Costa Mesa community. Such annexations will provide supportive public services as well as local political representation for these areas.

In connection with planning of these areas, the development of the unincorporated area south of the Orange County Airport should be subject to further study at the time that Orange County Airport planning programs and Newport Beach impact studies become available.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

The General Plan provides a guide for the development of public improvements over the next twenty years. While the Plan will entail increased capital and operational expenditures to accommodate future growth, it must be emphasized that substantial costs will be required regardless of plan proposals. The General Plan will help insure that improvements will be provided and coordinated in an economical manner.

The Planning Commission will have an important responsibility in assisting in the preparation of short- and long-range capital improvement programs. In the financing of capital improvement projects periodic analyses of revenue sources should be undertaken to determine the adequacy of existing funding sources and to identify new sources geared to the economic development of Costa Mesa. In this regard, the City should explore user charges, acreage fees, building permit additives, and special benefit assessments to help defray the costs of needed improvements in an equitable manner.

REGULATORY CONTROLS

Zoning regulations are a key device in implementing general plan proposals. Certain improvements in existing regulations could improve their effectiveness. Revision studies should be undertaken to: 1) provide statements of intent for each district which would indicate its relationship to the General Plan; and 2) incorporate standards and criteria within various districts rather than rely on individual zone exception procedures. Consideration should be given to the establishment of zoning incentives which would

encourage the assembly of larger sites within multiple-residential and industrial areas.

PLANNING REFERRALS

Mandatory referral is the procedure by which the Planning Commission reviews public land purchases and development programs to ensure conformity with the adopted General Plan. This important procedure provided for in the State Planning Act enables public programs to proceed according to plan and helps insure coordination of capital expenditures. It is essential that the Planning Commission be consulted early in all project planning to make referral procedures effective.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PLANNING

Costa Mesa is a part of a larger, urbanizing region. The City has a vital stake in planning and development programs being carried out in the areas of resource development and conservation, recreation, air and surface transportation, and facility programming. It is essential that Costa Mesa take steps to achieve maximum cooperation and coordination with federal, regional, county and city agencies and institutions concerned with orderly development of Orange County and the larger Southern California region. Through cooperative programs the City can play an effective role in dealing with developmental and environmental issues and problems which often extend across jurisdictional lines.

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